

IN THE CLAIMS

Clean version incorporating new claims:

1-23. (Cancelled)

24. (New) A method for improving the skills of a baseball player, comprising:

selecting a rubber spherical ball from which a segment has been removed to leave the ball comprised of an exterior spherical portion and a flat area, the removed segment being such that a perpendicular line from a center of the flat area to an opposite side of the remaining spherical portion is equal to or between forty-five and fifty-five percent of the original spherical ball diameter;

providing an instructional table illustrating at least one of grips, arm movements and release methods for pitching a baseball;

gripping, by a first user, the ball in a manner according to a value in the instructional table corresponding to a desired standard pitch;

throwing, by the first user, the ball in a manner according to a value in said instructional table corresponding to a desired standard pitch;

releasing, by the first user, the ball in a manner according to a value in said instructional table corresponding to a desired standard pitch;

swinging, by a second user, a bat having a substantially constant diameter wherein the diameter of the bat is smaller than the diameter of a regulation bat at the ball wherein said method enables a pitcher of lesser skill to attempt to throw standard pitches with the desired movement, enables said batter to attempt to identify standard pitches associated with arm movements, and improves the batter's batting skills.

25. (New) The method as recited in claim 24, wherein said step of providing the instructional table includes providing techniques for at least one of gripping, throwing, and releasing standard pitches.

26. (New) The method as recited in claim 25, wherein the standard pitches include a fastball in which the ball is gripped vertically and released straight overhand.

27. (New) The method as recited in claim 25, wherein the standard pitches include a knuckleball in which the ball is gripped by placing the flat area of the unit in a palm of a throwing hand and thrown and released straight overhand.

28. (New) The method as recited in claim 25, wherein the standard pitches include a screwball in which the ball is gripped vertically, thrown underhand, and released while twisting a throwing hand to the right for right hand throwers or to the left for left hand throwers.

29. (New) The method as recited in claim 25, wherein the standard pitches include a slider in which the ball is gripped vertically and thrown and released at a three-quarter side arm position.

30. (New) The method as recited in claim 25, wherein the standard pitches include a curveball in which the ball is gripped vertically and thrown and released at a one-half side arm position.

31. (New) The method as recited in claim 25, wherein the standard pitches include a sinkerball in which the ball is gripped vertically and thrown and released at a one-half side arm position.

32. (New) The method as recited in claim 25, wherein the standard pitches include a splitfinger fastball in which the ball is gripped the flat area up and thrown and released at a three-quarter side arm position.

21
a pitched ball
that curves in the
direction opposite to
that of a normal
curve ball

33. (New) The method as recited in claim 25, wherein the standard pitches include a rising fastball in which the ball is gripped with the flat area down, thrown one-half side arm, and released while slightly tilting the ball forward.
